

November 14, 1996

WARNING LETTER
CHI-8-97Chicago District *d1659b*
300 S. Riverside Plaza, Suite 550 Sou
Chicago, Illinois 60608
Telephone: 312-353-6863CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED*Redacted 1-13-97*

Mr. Joseph Caccamo, Vice President
Central Grocers Co-op Inc.
11100 Belmont
Franklin Park, Illinois 60131

Dear Mr. Caccamo:

An inspection of your firm located at 3701 North Centrella, Franklin Park, Illinois, by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on October 17 and 18, 1996, documented numerous insanitary conditions at your food storage warehouse which caused the stored food products to become adulterated.

Our inspection showed that food products stored and held at your facility were found adulterated. These adulterated food products are in violation of Sections 402(a)(3) and 402(a)(4) of the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (the Act). These adulterated food products: a) consisted in whole or in part of filthy substances, such as rodent fecal pellets, rodent hairs and rodent urine; and b) had been held under insanitary conditions whereby they have become contaminated with rodent, cat and bird filth.

Evidence of rodent activity in the form of excreta pellets, dead and recently killed mice were observed in all of the dairy coolers, and in dry goods storage areas A through I. More than 30 dead mice were observed in "ketch all" traps located in these areas during the inspection. Rodent gnawed Salsa containers and peanuts were observed. Scores of rodent excreta pellets were observed atop other foods such as Graham crackers, snack crackers and potatoes.

Our investigators observed cat feces and cat urine in the dairy cooler receiving area, in all three dairy coolers, and atop several plastic wrapped food products in many areas of the warehouse. More than five live cats were observed freely roaming the warehouse during the inspection.

Dock doors leading to the exterior of the building were not tight fitting. There were openings up to 4 inches wide by six inches high, especially at the base of the rail doors. Rail siding outside of these doors was covered with a dense growth of weeds and shrubs.

A copy of the FDA-483, Inspectional Observations, issued to the warehouse manager at the conclusion of the inspection is enclosed.

Our Laboratory confirmed the findings of rodent excreta, rodent hairs and cat feces sampled from the warehouse during the inspection.

The above listed violations are not intended to be all-inclusive. It is your responsibility to assure adherence with each requirement of the federal regulations. The Investigators reported you have destroyed lots of Salsa which showed evidence of rodent gnawing and began to take some steps to correct the insanitary conditions in your facility. We request that you take prompt action to correct all violations.

Please provide this office within 15 days of receipt of this letter a detailed response stating the actions you plan to take and have taken to correct and prevent the recurrence of these objectionable conditions. Provide the time within which corrections will be completed, reasons why any corrective action can not be completed, and documentation to show that corrections have been made. Failure to take prompt action to correct all violations may result in regulatory action without further notice. Such action includes seizure and/or injunction.

Your reply should be directed to Paul A. Boehmer, Compliance Officer.

Sincerely,


Raymond V. Mlecko
District Director

Enclosure

cc: John Coari, Warehouse Manager
CGCI
3701 North Centrella
Franklin Park, IL 60131